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Canadian Forestry Service-Maritimes

TECHNICAL NOTE

HIGHLIGHTS OF FOREST PEST CONDITIONS IN THE MARITIMES IN MID-JUNE 1988

For our clients' information, we will again issue periodic reports on major forest pest conditions in 1988. Our aim is to highlight the more significant problems as they occur and give updates on their development. This report includes information on forest pest conditions, as currently known, in the Maritimes Region in mid-June 1988.

Development of both trees and pests is greatly influenced by weather: as always, it was variable in the early part of the season. Spring was cool and development was slower than usual; northern New Brunswick, once again, was ahead of the rest of the Region at the start.

Drought in the summer of 1987 resulted in extensive spring branch mortality of sugar maple trees in 1988, both in urbanized areas and along highways over much of New Brunswick, with the possible exception of the northeastern part of the Province. Spring branch mortality is not to be confused with other types of dieback observed on a variety of hardwoods. Leaves on the affected branches wilted shortly after bud-break without reaching full size, often changed to a yellowish color, and then shrivelled. The cambium was dry and branches died from the base out, rather than in the usual die-back fashion. These branches, observed to have shown stress symptoms last summer, i.e. very early foliage discoloration and leaf drop, were usually the ones affected and symptoms often occurred on the side of trees facing roads or other stress creating situations. Almost all the trees affected are more than 25 years old. They lost from few to many branches and in many cases the survival of the trees is in doubt. These conditions have not been observed in natural stands more than 10 metres from roadside. Another possible manifestation of last year's drought is the extremely heavy seed crop on maples - this in turn will create another stress for the trees.

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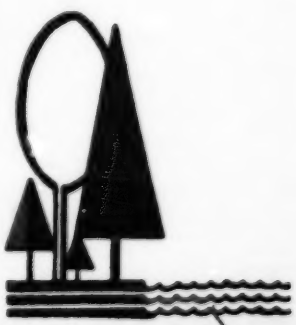

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Pine leaf adelgid populations were extremely high in many areas of Nova Scotia in 1987 and considerable shoot mortality of white pine was expected in the spring of 1988. Moderate and severe shoot mortality of white pine is common in much of Queens, Kings, and Lunenburg counties, with less damage occurring in Halifax, Pictou, and Colchester counties. Younger trees appear to be affected more seriously than older ones.

Needle discoloration of one-year-old foliage of black spruce, in plantations 18-20 years old, in large areas of northwestern New Brunswick, observed both in 1986 and 1987, has started to show again in 1988. The cause of the condition is still unknown and is under investigation but its effect on tree growth is obvious and of considerable concern.

Oak leafroller, a perennial problem in red oak stands in much of western Nova Scotia in recent years, is active again. Even though the feeding period is not yet completed, moderate and light defoliation is already much in evidence throughout the affected area. Another year of defoliation-induced stress is likely to further weaken trees already severely damaged in many stands.

Serpentine leafminer populations are once again very high on trembling aspen in the northern half of New Brunswick, giving affected stands a silvery appearance. Only a trace of discoloration was noted in Nova Scotia and occasional trees were found affected in Prince Edward Island.

A variety of other pests are active in the Region, among them **needle rusts**, **globose gall rust** on jack pine, **birch leafminer**, **satin moth**, **balsam twig aphid**, **spruce budworm**, **spruce budmoths**, **eastern tent caterpillar**, **uglynest caterpillar**, **poplar leafmining sawfly**; a variety of tree conditions have been observed, among them **late frost** (severe in places), **Stillwell syndrome** (common in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island), and **winter drying** and **roadside salt damage** (not as widespread as in previous years).

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Forest Insect and Disease Survey

June 15, 1988

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